



NATIONAL SURVEY OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES

SOUTH CAROLINA
Fall 2010

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from the INSTITUTE FOR CHILDREN, POVERTY, AND HOMELESSNESS

South Carolina had an estimated 474 homeless families on a single night in 2009, with providers serving more than twice their bed capacity over the course of the year.¹ This brief summarizes some of the state's public and private initiatives to assist these families.

State Taskforce on Homelessness

Taskforce: There is no taskforce on homelessness in South Carolina. The South Carolina Council on Homelessness (established by executive order in July 2001) has been inactive since 2006.

Governor's Appointee: None.



Demographic Summary and Overview of Regional Organization

	South Carolina	Columbia ²
Persons in homeless families ³	1,285	375
Number of family shelter beds ⁴	1,785	425
Persons in homeless families (per 10,000 population in families) ⁵	8	4
Percent of families in poverty ⁶	18.32%	24.74%
10-Year plan date approved or implemented	No plan	2005
10-Year plan target population	No plan	All
Point-in-time count frequency	Biennially	Biennially
Point-in-time count managing agency	South Carolina Council on Homelessness ⁷	Midlands Area Consortium for the Homeless
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) managing agency	Locally managed	Richland County
Main organizing agency or Continuum of Care (CoC) lead applicant	None	Housing Authority of the City of Columbia

Lack of Leadership from State Government

As the state government has remained unresponsive to addressing the issue of homelessness, South Carolina's five metropolitan Continuum of Care (CoC) have assumed responsibility as regional CoCs in order to provide services in rural areas. As a result, each CoC serves a relatively large number of counties with most services offered in urban areas, leaving many rural clients to travel long distances for services. For example, the Midlands CoC, which comprises 14 counties (including the City of Columbia), serves nearly one-third (30%) of the state's area or over 9,000 square miles. Of the 16% of homeless clients who receive mental health services in the Midlands CoC, over half received such services in Columbia.

Although the state government formed an interagency homeless council in 2001, a lack of support from many government agencies led to the deterioration of the council in 2006. In addition, the council's statewide plan to end homelessness, developed in 2004, failed to receive endorsement from Governor Mark Sanford. Meanwhile, on a single night in January 2009, South Carolina identified 1,279

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The *National Survey of Programs and Services for Homeless Families* is an online resource for service providers, advocates, researchers, and public policy makers working in the field of family homelessness. The Web site provides a state-by-state snapshot of the interconnections between governmental and nonprofit work to end family homelessness. For additional information on South Carolina and other states, visit www.icprwb.org

persons in homeless families. Family homelessness is primarily concentrated in the counties that contain the cities of Greenville (247 persons in homeless families per 1,000 square miles), Myrtle Beach (179), Rock Hill (172), and Columbia (163).⁸

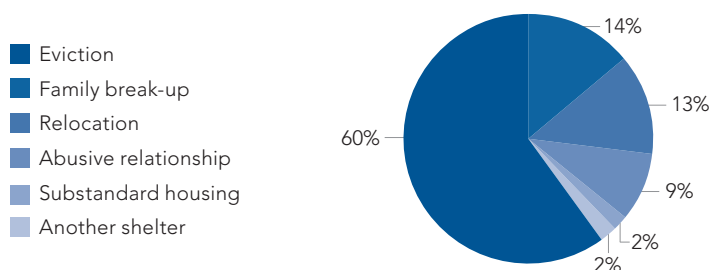
Helping Columbia's Homeless Students Achieve Success

Richland County School District One in the City of Columbia established the Parents and Students Succeed Program (PASS) to ensure that homeless children receive quality education equal to that of every other child. PASS works to identify homeless students, reduce enrollment and learning barriers, and increase attendance in each of the district's 50 schools. In 2009, 966 students, equivalent to 4% of the total district enrollment, experienced homelessness in Richland One. The program transported 45.5% of all eligible students in order to reduce disruption in their academic progress. In addition, PASS offers after-school tutoring programs to homeless students at all six shelters within the district. Certified teachers utilize a computer-assisted learning program that is aligned with state educational standards to tutor students in small groups. Over fifteen years ago, in conjunction with the University of South Carolina, PASS developed a graduate level course entitled "Promoting School Success in Homeless and Other High-risk Students: Concepts and Strategies." The free course provides teachers and educators with the tools necessary to work more effectively with the most at-risk children.⁹

Sheltering Columbia's Homeless Families

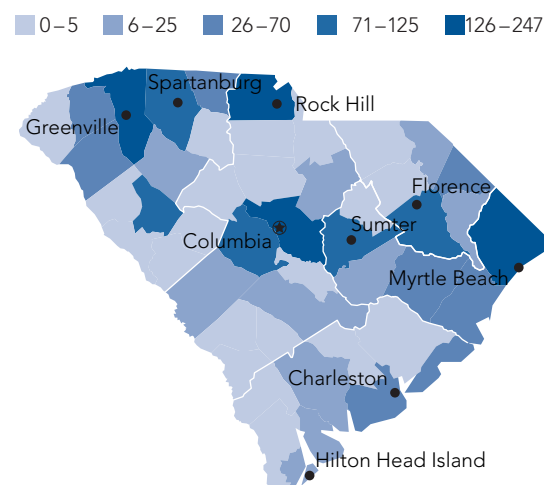
Although a few shelters in the Midlands area assist both families and individuals, the Family Shelter, a nonprofit organization in the City of Columbia, is the only provider that exclusively serves families, including pregnant mothers, single fathers, and couples with children. Founded in 1979, the Family Shelter operates fifteen units of emergency shelter and seven units of transitional housing for homeless families. The organization offers an array of supportive services, such as case management, child care, financial instruction, referral, employment, and housing search services. In addition, the Family Shelter partners with other agencies to provide students, including those in the surrounding community, with homework assistance and supplemental academic instruction. In 2009, the organization provided emergency food and shelter to 135 families (comprised of 160 adults, 220 children, and 15 pregnant mothers) at an average cost of \$20 per day per family. While the Family Shelter serves 14 counties in the Midlands CoC, nearly three-quarters (73%) of clients who seek services are from Columbia. Families sought emergency assistance at the Family Shelter as a result of eviction (60%), family break-up (14%), and relocation (13%). Over half (51%) of families exiting the shelter became independently housed, while more than one-third (34%) went to live with family and friends.¹⁰

Reasons for Seeking Emergency Services at the Columbia Family Shelter



Source: Columbia Family Shelter, 2009 Annual Report.

Number of Persons in Homeless Families (per 1,000 square miles by county)



Source: South Carolina Council on Homelessness, South Carolina HUD Homeless Count—Statistical Tables, 2009. Continuum of Care boundaries are represented in white.

Endnotes

¹ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD's 2009 CoC Homeless Assistance Programs—Homeless Populations and Subpopulations; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, AHAR Exchange Public Reports: 2009 Comprehensive Report of Sheltered Homeless Persons.

² Statistics for Columbia include Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Chester, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lexington, Newberry, Orangeburg, Richland, and York counties.

³ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2009 Homeless Populations and Subpopulations.

⁴ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD's 2009 CoC Homeless Assistance Programs—Housing Inventory Chart Report.

⁵ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2009 Homeless Populations and Subpopulations; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006–2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates.

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, 2006–2008 American Community Survey.

⁷ While the South Carolina Council on Homelessness does not perform any leadership or planning functions, the council does coordinate the biennial point-in-time count.

⁸ Anita Floyd (Vice President of Community Impact, United Way of the Midlands), interview with ICPH, September 2010; South Carolina Council on Homelessness, South Carolina HUD Homeless Count—Statistical Tables, 2009; U.S. Census Bureau, "Cartographic Boundary Files," <http://www.census.gov/geo/www/cob/>

⁹ Deborah Boone (McKinney-Vento Coordinator, Richland County School District One), interview with ICPH, October 2010; South Carolina Department of Education, 2009–10 Active Enrollment for Districts by Grade.

¹⁰ Columbia Family Shelter, 2009 Annual Report.